Department of Labour and Advanced Education

2015-16 Statement of Mandate

Contents

Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister 3

Department Mandate, Mission, and Vision 5

Strategic Directions 6

Government Priorities 7

Budget Context 13

Performance Measures 14

Message from the Minister and Deputy Minister

We are pleased to present the 2015-16 Statement of Mandate for the Department of Labour and Advanced Education.

Our department's focus is broad, with the goal of getting more people working and working safely, training, studying, hiring, and bringing to life the innovative ideas that will help our province's economy and people thrive and prosper.

The work of the department is centered on key branches that include post-secondary education, workplace safety, labour services, and skills and training.

Over the past year we've celebrated many accomplishments. We successfully negotiated a Canada Job Fund Agreement with the federal government that will allow us to continue to help Nova Scotians access the training and support they need for good jobs. We also made great strides toward accomplishing the goals set out in the Workplace Safety Strategy, which aims to make Nova Scotia's workplaces safer.

In July, the Province established an industry-led Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency which has begun work to help more apprentices get and complete the training they need for good jobs here at home. The Agency has also worked hard to put agreements in place with other provinces to help apprentices finish their training faster.

The next year is expected to be equally as rewarding and challenging.

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will continue working to get more employers hiring apprentices, more youth apprentices and underrepresented groups registered, and more apprentices completing their training.

We will focus on the quality and sustainability of our post-secondary education system in a way that increases access and participation for all Nova Scotia students. After months of discussion with students, parents, universities, and others, we will share what we heard and focus our efforts on Nova Scotian students studying here at home. Negotiations are underway on a new Memorandum of Understanding with the universities that will chart the course for the next four years. We will be guided by what we've heard from university partners and students as we make the decisions needed to ensure our university system is here for years to come, within what taxpayers can afford.

We'll strengthen our partnerships with industry leaders, educators, and the private sector to create more opportunities to support and foster ideas, products, and job growth in the province. The sandboxes launched last year have expanded opportunities for students and innovators to experiment with new ideas, learn from their peers, and connect with industry to take them to the next level. We will continue to build on that success.

The safety of the province's workers is of paramount importance. Over the next year we will continue working toward the goals of the Workplace Safety Strategy, with a focus on education, compliance, and enforcement. We will continue to target high risk employers who break safety laws, and work closely with employers, workers, and safety partners to take a close look at our regulations and determine what, if any, changes are needed.

The department will also focus on timely access to services for those seeking advice on labour standards, workers' compensation appeals, and labour relations.

Over the next several months we will continue consulting with Career Resource Centers and employment partners to make the necessary changes to better meet the needs of workers looking for jobs and employers looking to hire.

The OneNS report was clear: it called for immediate action to ensure we meet our economic challenges head-on, and to do our part of ensure our province prospers now and well into the future. We look forward to working with labour, business, education, and safety and training partners to build a safer, more prosperous, and vibrant province for all Nova Scotians.

We encourage readers to learn more about our department by visiting www.gov.ns.ca/lae/.

Honourable Kelly Regan
Minister, Labour & Advanced Education

Duff Montgomerie
Deputy Minister, Labour & Advanced Education

Department Mandate, Mission, and Vision

The Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education (LAE) works to contribute to a competitive workforce by making strategic investments in people, programs, services and partnerships. Our mandate is to provide a fair, equitable, safe, productive and inclusive environment in which to learn, work and live.

The broad mandate of the department includes:

- Regulatory responsibility for occupational health and safety, technical safety, the workers' advisers program, labour relations, and labour standards.

- Improving access among Nova Scotians to labour market information, employment services and learning programs that support their labour market attachment and growth. Strategic action is taken to align the needs of employees with those of employers to help all Nova Scotians prepare for, find and keep employment.

- Providing opportunities for individuals to advance at home, in the community or in the workplace through adult learning, literacy and essential skills, and skills development programs.

- Providing funding, services, and support to post-secondary institutions to ensure students maintain access to high quality post-secondary education and training.

Note: The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency, established July 2014, is responsible for stewarding and operating a relevant, accessible and responsive industry-led trades training and certification system. While it is a separate agent of the crown, this year the work of the Agency is reflected in the Department of Labour and Advanced Education's Statement of Mandate.

Vision

Our vision is that the Department of Labour and Advanced Education will foster Nova Scotians' belief in a bigger future - knowing where the jobs are and will be, building the skills to access those jobs, and working to their highest potential in safe, productive and inclusive workplaces.

Mission

The Department of Labour and Advanced Education will work to ensure that all Nova Scotians believe their future is here, with each person confident in their abilities to prosper. We will do this by maximizing our capacity to have more people learning, more people working and working safely, and more sustainable businesses in our province.

Strategic Directions

The Department of Labour and Advanced Education's strategic plan for the years 2013-2016 is to build a strong foundation to advance government priorities through the following six strategic directions:

Educate
Build a more responsive system of learning and training through partnerships with businesses, labour, institutions, and service providers, preparing Nova Scotians for a prosperous future.

Invest
Invest in the skills and knowledge required to build the workforce we need now and in the future.

Safeguard
Make a safe, fair, and equitable work environment a priority for all employers and employees.

Grow
Better meet labour market demands by retaining our youth, engaging under-represented groups, repatriating skilled Atlantic Canadians, and attracting newcomers.

Inform
Provide ease of navigation and access to enable Nova Scotians to get information about programs, services, and offerings.

Account
Improve investment outcomes through informed decision-making and accountability, underpinned by strong measurement and evaluation.

Government Priorities

The Department of Labour and Advanced Education's strategic directions will support the Nova Scotia Government's priorities for 2015-16:

1) **Fiscal**: Balance the budget during the Government's mandate and achieve sustainable government.

2) **Economy**: Create a climate for private sector and social enterprise economic growth to support OneNS goals.

3) **Education**: Increase workforce participation and entrepreneurship by improving early childhood and P-12 education systems and continually improving opportunities for skills development and knowledge through post-secondary education, training, and apprenticeship.

4) **Demographic**: Increase net interprovincial in-migration and international immigration levels; enhance wellness and health initiatives; enhance workforce participation of youth, older workers, and marginalized communities; and enhance communities and social well-being.

1) Balance the budget during the Government's mandate and achieve sustainable government.

The department will advance this goal through its strategic directions to strengthen investment outcomes, accountability, and stakeholder partnerships.

Stronger Accountability
LAE is taking positive steps to improve our accountability to our stakeholders. We practice responsible fiscal management, including strengthening departmental evaluation and performance measurement functions.

The department continues to work jointly with the federal government to develop and report on meaningful outcome measures for our labour market agreements, while also taking steps to maximize federal investment in labour market programming. This year, the department will undertake a joint review of the Canada-Nova Scotia Job Grant initiative.

Through the implementation of Memoranda of Understanding with universities and the Nova Scotia Community College, the department is working to ensure that our Provincial investments in post-secondary education institutions are sustainable into the future.

2) Create a climate for private sector and social enterprise economic growth to support OneNS goals.

The department will advance this goal through its strategic directions to foster partnerships with business and post-secondary institutions, effective workplace-based training, and safe and fair work environments.

Innovative Post-Secondary Partnerships
Among Nova Scotia's greatest economic strengths are our world-class post-secondary education institutions. In 2014, the Post-Secondary Education Sandbox pilot program was announced to help leverage the human resource and research capacity in the province's universities and colleges to create knowledge-based businesses, while also providing new educational opportunities for students. Sandboxes are collaborative spaces hosted by universities and colleges that bring together students, mentors, and external advisors to take business concepts from idea to execution.

Over the course of the three-year pilot program, the department and its partners will provide leadership in creating an entrepreneurial culture, showing young people that they have the option to create their own job here in Nova Scotia. By investing in sandboxes, leveraging the existing innovation eco-system, and helping students create new opportunities, the department is focused on enabling young people to stay in the province.

An Innovation Team, with five sub-teams, has been created to improve post-secondary education in Nova Scotia by strengthening collaboration among post-secondary institutions, between institutions and government, and between institutions and the private sector. The Innovation Team will explore ways to collaborate on new and emerging opportunities and areas of mutual interest and benefit, to identify areas where greater efficiencies can be achieved, and to strengthen the competitive advantage of Nova Scotia's post-secondary sector. The Innovation Team will further explore opportunities to work with institutions and other partners to advance government policies and priorities as they relate to providing education and training, connecting Nova Scotians to the labour market, promoting research and development, increasing immigration, and enhancing the overall economic and social prosperity of the province.

Integrated System of Career and Workforce Development Services
In 2015-16, the department will lead the transformation of employment and workforce development services across Nova Scotia to better help all Nova Scotians identify, train for, and secure a good job; to better ensure current and future labour supply for employers; and to better align employment and labour market programs with employer needs. The transformation will occur through three primary areas of change: improved service delivery channels, improved service quality, and improved access and reach. The new system will eliminate service duplication and fill gaps where they exist, providing quality career planning and employment tools and resources through a variety of channels under a common brand. External service providers will have certified career practitioners on staff and will deliver a consistent menu of services and standardized tools that meet quality standards through newly-defined agreements. Careers Nova Scotia will also provide specialized target populations with more consistent access to resources that better meet their specific needs.

Industry-led Approach to Apprenticeship and Apprentice Mobility
This year, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will continue to increase employer

participation in apprenticeship through the Apprenticeship START program and the establishment of Trade Advisory Committees to advise the Apprenticeship Board on trade policy, regulation, training and other issues. The Agency will further engage employers in the development of a diversity and inclusion strategy for apprenticeship.

The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency is also taking steps to improve the mobility of apprentices across the Atlantic region and across the country. The Agency is leading the establishment of Memoranda of Understanding with other jurisdictions on the recognition of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training and the harmonization of apprenticeship requirements in the Atlantic region for ten key trades by 2017.

Helping Business Recruit and Retain Talent

Three Business Workforce Consultants are now providing support for strategic workforce planning and human resource management practices to industry in the province, and helping individual small businesses in areas where Sector Councils are not available develop their own workforce strategies and improve their human resource skills. The consultants have a specific focus on businesses led by or employing Aboriginal and African-Nova Scotian populations, as well as other under-represented groups. Specific services include helping businesses to connect with major projects, improving recruitment and staff development strategies, and making optimal use of available programs and resources, such as Welcoming Workplaces, SkillsOnlineNS, the Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI) and One Journey.

Supporting Workplace-Based Training

The Workplace Education Initiative (WEI) works in partnership with business, industry, and labour to support the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce, improve workplace essential skills, and help industry manage change. WEI is a nationally-recognized program aimed at improving workplace essential skills and assisting with career transition. WEI supports rural and urban small business through cluster programs whereby a business association sponsors the program that involves several small businesses. Each Workplace Education program is customized to business needs, as each program involves representatives from across the organization and is based on an Organizational Needs Assessment. Training focuses on fundamental skills such as essentials for small business, document use, communication skills for frontline workers and supervisors, computer skills, and academic upgrading.

With the announcement of major projects, such as the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy, Maritime Link, and offshore oil exploration, Government is currently making important investments to help small- and medium-sized businesses improve their skills, knowledge, and performance in order to qualify for opportunities in new and existing supply chains. In 2014, the department partnered with LearnSphere Canada to develop curriculum to help small businesses build the skills they need to engage in a Request for Proposals and manage new projects. Through this partnership, a 40-hour supply chain essentials program is now being offered to businesses across the province.

Collaborative Approaches to Workforce Development

In 2014 the Departments of Labour and Advanced Education and Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, together with Nova Scotia Business Inc., launched the 100 Businesses initiative, committing to meeting directly with at least 100 businesses across the province. This initiative will continue in 2015, giving businesses across Nova Scotia who contribute greatly to their local economies the opportunity to participate in discussions about key challenges, growth opportunities, policy issues, and potential areas of co-operation to help grow the economy and strengthen the workforce.

The department is also committed to helping individual Nova Scotians develop the skills and knowledge they need to participate in the job market. In 2014-15, six Regional Workforce Committees were established across the province to ensure that Nova Scotians have the right skills to meet the skill requirements of the labour market. Each committee will focus on partnering to foster a strategic approach to workforce development, provide labour market information, identify local priority sectors and innovative projects to encourage employer engagement, and match job seekers with high value jobs. Committee members include (but are not limited to) representatives from Labour and Advanced Education, Economic and Rural Development and Tourism, Nova Scotia Business Inc., Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, municipal government, private industry, Chambers of Commerce, and educational institutions.

Labour Market Agreements
The recently-negotiated *Canada-Nova Scotia Job Fund Agreement* will enable the province to continue to support career and workforce development services for thousands of Nova Scotians. This includes some of the province's most vulnerable citizens, who are looking for jobs or better jobs, and employers who are seeking to recruit and train workers. The six-year agreement, worth $80.2 million with an annual budget of about $13.2 million, replaces the former *Labour Market Agreement*, and supports participation, attachment, and productivity in the workplace.

The department is also leading Nova Scotia's discussions with other Provinces, Territories, and the federal government concerning the improvement of Labour Market Development Agreements. The *Labour Market Development Agreement* is the cornerstone of Nova Scotia's suite of labour market programs and services, focused on helping unemployed and underemployed Nova Scotians acquire the skills and knowledge they need to find rewarding work. It is funded by Employment Insurance premiums, which are distributed among Provinces and Territories through a federal allocation formula. In 2014-15, Nova Scotia's LMDA allocation was valued at $79 million/year plus $10 million/year in fixed administration costs.

Safe and Fair Workplaces
Following extensive consultation across the province, the Department of Labour and Advanced Education and the Workers Compensation Board (WCB) launched the *Workplace Safety Strategy for Nova Scotians 2013-2017*. The success of this strategy depends on workers, employers, industry, labour, and all partners in safety, including LAE and WCB, coming together to strengthen the culture of workplace safety in Nova Scotia.

The strategy's vision is to make Nova Scotia the safest place to work in Canada. The four strategic goals to support this vision are to improve safety performance, have visible leadership commitment, promote continuous improvements to our safety culture, and improve access to resources. Through collaborative working relationships, progress has been and will continue to be made across the strategy's key areas of focus.

The department further supports fair, equitable, and stable workplace environments throughout Nova Scotia through effective labour relations and enforcement of labour standards and other workplace laws and regulations. This includes overseeing the minimum wage review process and protections for vulnerable workers, while developing rules that will create a level playing field for employers.

3) Increase workforce participation and entrepreneurship by improving early childhood and P-12 education systems and continually improving opportunities for skills development and knowledge through post-secondary education, training, and apprenticeship.

The department will advance this goal through its strategic directions to build a more responsive system of learning and training and to invest in the skills and knowledge required to build the workforce we need now and into the future.

Quality Post-Secondary System
The department is working closely with post-secondary institutions across the province and taking concrete steps to focus on the quality and sustainability of our post-secondary system, as well as access and participation for Nova Scotian students.

Memoranda of Understanding with Universities and the Community College
The Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) is the training arm of the Province, and its main priority is to provide the programs necessary to train Nova Scotians to meet business and industry's labour market demands. To help ensure alignment between the Government and NSCC, the two parties signed a Memorandum of Understanding in September 2013, establishing a partnership framework that clarifies the role of both parties in meeting provincial priorities and the needs of the labour market.

To ensure a similar alignment between the Province and universities, the Government will negotiate a new Memorandum of Understanding with universities for 2015-2019.

Supporting Apprentice Success and Expanding Enforcement Capacity
The Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will ensure training and certification pathways are relevant, integrated, effective and available, in order to meet the demands of the provincial labour market and to develop a skilled workforce that supports the growth of Nova Scotia's economy.

Unsupervised and untrained tradespeople are of particular concern in the compulsory-certified trades, where appropriate training ensures the safety of all workers and the general public. To expand enforcement capacity in 2015-16, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency will work with Safety Inspectors to monitor job sites for the use of certified tradespersons and apprentices in the compulsory trades.

Helping Adult Learners Achieve their Career Goals
While basic literacy training and high school completion continues to be an important part of the work done by the Nova Scotia School of Adult Learning, the department is focusing more attention on processes and programs that prepare learners to enter the workforce or pursue further education and training. By improving common assessment tools and processes, we will establish a more accurate and consistent approach to placing learners in the most appropriate programs. In addition, service providers will be required to ensure that each learner has an individual learning plan that includes career goals wherever appropriate. The department is also supporting adult learning service providers in the delivery of employment-focused programs that prepare learners for specific occupations based on labour market demand. A newly-developed Record of Achievement and Skills Record will document learners' essential and employable skills and help them to get jobs.

4) Increase net interprovincial in-migration and international immigration levels; enhance wellness and health initiatives; enhance workforce participation of youth, older workers, and marginalized communities; and enhance communities and social well-being.

The department will advance this goal through its strategic directions to support the participation of marginalized communities and help employers attract and retain talent.

Improving Credential Recognition
Many highly skilled immigrants are forced to work far below their abilities because their credentials are not recognized by regulators. Likewise, many other Nova Scotians are blocked from jobs because they do not possess the formal training or academic credential, even though they may have other, equivalent experience. LAE will increase the number of internationally educated individuals who have their credentials recognized by helping regulators to develop Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) assessment tools for internationally-educated individuals and by funding bridging programs for individuals. The department will also increase the capacity of other stakeholders to utilize RPL with competency assessor training, bridge programming, training Record of Achievement Assessors and by utilizing the Nova Scotia Core Employability Skills Framework to assist employers identify the essential and employability skills they require for entry level jobs.

Supporting Students with Disabilities
As part of an effort to increase the number of students with disabilities graduating from post-secondary institutions in Nova Scotia, the department will continue to provide funding and grants for disability-related equipment and services, including accommodations and on-site counseling.

Attracting and Retaining International Students
The department is developing an International Student Strategy. The primary goal of this strategy will be to increase and diversify the number of international students pursuing their post-secondary education in Nova Scotia and, ultimately, to increase the number of these students who choose to stay, live, and work in Nova Scotia.

Labour and Advanced Education

	2014-2015 Estimate	2014-2015 Forecast	2015-2016 Estimate
Program & Service Area	($thousands)	($thousands)	($thousands)
Gross Department Expenses:	348,420	347,185	362,931
Administration	1,073	2,331	855
Corporate Policy and Services	5,640	5,289	4,675
Safety	14,133	12,332	14,575
Labour Services	7,820	7,209	7,891
Skills and Learning	117,159	115,714	128,040
N.S Apprenticeship Agency	8,711	8,711	10,713
Higher Education	55,456	57,171	54,235
School Cap Amortization	5,511	5,511	5,203
Community College Grants	132,917	132,917	136,744
Total Gross Departmental Expenses	348,420	347,185	362,931
Additional Information:			
Ordinary Revenues	(6,775)	(6,525)	(7,322)
Fees and Other Charges	(1,878)	(1,760)	(1,599)
Recoveries	(123,960)	(124,661)	(124,728)
TCA Purchase Requirements	0	0	3,280
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	283.3	247.3	273.4

Performance Measures

1) **STRATEGIC DIRECTION** **Educate:** Build a more responsive system of learning and training through partnerships with businesses, labour, institutions and service providers, preparing Nova Scotians for a prosperous future. **OUTCOME (immediate or intermediate)** Collaborative partnerships with businesses, labour, educational institutions and service providers that support responsive education, training and work experience programs.			
MEASURE	**BASE YEAR DATA**	**2015-16 TARGET**	**TRENDS**
1.1) Participation in LAE employer-sponsored training and work experience programs (not co-op) (including START, One Journey, SkillsOnlineNS, Workplace Innovation & Productivity Skills Incentive)	2012-13 Total o 7,765 clients served o 593 businesses • START 2012-13 (part year from Oct 2012) o 201 clients served o 115 businesses • One Journey 2012-13 o 191 clients served o 36 businesses • SkillsOnlineNS 2012-13 (part year) o 3,233 clients served o 347 businesses • WIPSI 2012-13 o 4,140 clients served o 95 businesses	Increase participation in employer-sponsored training and work experience programs	2014-15 Total (to Dec 31/14) o 26,034 clients served o 1,715 businesses 2013-14 Total o 18,865 clients served o 3,438 businesses • START 2014-15 (YTD) o 762 clients served o 364 businesses • One Journey 2014-15 (YTD) o 150 clients served o 25 businesses • SkillsOnlineNS 2014-15 (YTD) o 16,845 clients served o 1,050 businesses • WIPSI 2014-15 (YTD) o 8,277 clients served o 276 businesses
1.2) % of 18-64 year olds who indicated that over the past 12 months, they have been sponsored or supported by an employer to take education or training (LAE's Labour Market Activity and Intentions Survey (LMAIS))	2012: 39% of NS employees	Increase to 45% by the end of 2015-16	2014: 41% of NS employees 2013: 40% of NS employees
1.3) Implementation of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Universities and NSCC; and implementation of sandboxes to support an innovative and sustainable post-secondary system	N/A	Finalize deliverables of 2012-2015 MOU with universities, manage deliverables under NSCC MOU, and monitor sandbox progress	The MOU Working Groups (Quality Measures, Tuition Policy, International Student Policy and Access and Affordability) will submit final reports by the end of March 2015

			NSCC MOU signed in 2013 and working groups established to meet MOU deliverables Six post-secondary education sandboxes launched since March 2014

2015-16 Strategic Actions to Achieve Target

- Identify and respond to priority needs of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, make appropriate linkages/referrals to existing programs/services, and identify areas for enhancement.
- Deliver quality programs where there is a shared responsibility with the business community and government to target employment readiness and encourage increased employer investment in skills training (e.g., START, One Journey, SkillsOnlineNS, Workplace Innovation & Productivity Skills Incentive).
- Negotiation of a new MOU with universities for 2015-2019.
- Oversee the progress of the six post-secondary education sandboxes that bring together students, mentors and external advisors to take innovative business concepts from idea to execution.
- Work with the NSCC through a number of working groups that will meet the deliverables outlined in the NSCC MOU. Current NSCC-LAE working groups address the areas of Quality Assurance, Program Mix, Graduate Follow-Up Surveys, and Budget Development - Financial Planning.

2) **STRATEGIC DIRECTION** **Invest**: Invest in the required skills and knowledge to build the workforce we need now and in the future.			
Outcome (immediate or intermediate) Accessible employment supports, training programs and information services that help Nova Scotians seize and create opportunities for employment.			
MEASURE	**BASE YEAR DATA**	**2015-16 TARGET**	**TRENDS**
2.1) Number of people trained (including Skills Development, Apprenticeship, Workplace Education, Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning)	2011-12 Total 19,535 SD- 5,707 Apprentices- 5,922, as of Sept 2012 WEI- 3,400 NSSAL- 4,506	Maintain or increase number of clients accessing training	2014-15 (to Dec 31/14) Total: 11,877 (does not include NSSAL) SD: 2,721 Apprentices: 5,949 WEI: 3,207 NSSAL: N/A 2013-14 Total: 15, 234 SD: 3,114 Apprentices: 6,009 WEI: 2,358 NSSAL: 4,734 2012-13 Total: 21,142 SD: 6,100 Apprentices: 5942 WEI: 4,639 NSSAL: 4,461
2.2) % of NSCC graduates working in a related field	2012: 83%	Maintain or increase employment in a related occupation for NSCC graduates	2013: 83%
2.3) % of 18-64 year olds who went through career transition in the last 2 years who agreed that they had sufficient information and advice to make career decisions (LMAIS)	2013: 48% (8 or higher on a 1-10 scale)	50%	2014: 46%
2.4) Ratio of loans to grants in Student Assistance	2009-10: 80% loans/20% grants	Maintain 40% grants	2014-15: 60/40 – 40% 2013-14: 60/40 – 40% 2012-13: 65/35 – 35% 2011-12: 70/30 – 30% 2010-11: 80/20 – 20% 2009-10: 80/20 – 20%

2015-16 Strategic Actions to Achieve Target

- Implement the actions of the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency's Strategic Plan 2014-2019.
- Transform the structure and delivery of career services to create an integrated service bundle under a common brand that helps Nova Scotians understand, prepare for and meet the need of the labour market and help businesses find, hire, manage and develop the talent they need to be productive in a global economy.
- Continue to implement 0% interest in Nova Scotia student loans and explore new loan forgiveness options as part of a broader effort to make post-secondary more accessible and affordable for students.
- Make available to all Nova Scotians, timely and relevant information that clearly identifies what jobs will be in demand, what skills are needed for those jobs, and how to identify training opportunities.
- Embrace technology to help improve access to education, training, employment, and entrepreneurship opportunities for all Nova Scotians.

3) STRATEGIC DIRECTION
Safeguard: Make a safe, fair, and equitable work environment a priority for all employers and employees.

OUTCOME (immediate or intermediate)
LAE is leading the building of a culture of safety in Nova Scotia through education, enforcement and strong partnerships in workplace and technical safety.

MEASURE	BASE YEAR DATA	2015-16 TARGET	TRENDS
3.1) % of staff who expressed that the department creates a safe work environment ("How's Work Going?" survey)	2004: 67%	LAE has the highest score on safety across all departments	2013: 84% 2011: 84% 2009: 83% 2006: 74% 2005: 82% 2004: 67%
3.2) % of 18-64 year old Nova Scotians who agree that their work environment is safe and healthy (LMAIS)	2012: 67% (8 or higher on 1-10 scale)	Improvement in score	2014: 68.3% 2013: 69% (Responses indicating 8 or higher on 1-10 scale)
3.3) Compliance with the Occupational Health & Safety Act and regulations by outside organizations (through an Internal Responsibility System)	2008-09: 71%	IRS compliance at 85% or better	2013-14: 81% 2012-13: 86% 2011-12: 82% 2010-11: 84% 2009-10: 79% 2008-09: 71%

2015-16 Strategic Actions to Achieve Target

- Continue to implement the Workplace Safety Strategy.
- Promote a culture of safety through a collaborative working relationship with all partners to enhance workplace and technical safety throughout Nova Scotia.
- Improve overall enforcement and compliance practices, including balancing the need for education and awareness.
- Design a new service delivery model that better supports the achievement of the regulatory mandate of Technical Safety.

- Advance a flexible, risk-managed, and results-based legislative framework to ensure that minimum regulated safety standards are achieved or exceeded.
- Continue to support the department's Safe and Healthy Workplace Initiative and the Wellness @ Work Committee.

4) STRATEGIC DIRECTION
Grow: Better meet labour market demands by retaining our youth, engaging under-represented groups.

OUTCOME (immediate or intermediate)
Young Nova Scotians see more career opportunities in the province and under-represented communities are engaged in education and employment.

MEASURE	BASE YEAR DATA	2015-16 TARGET	TRENDS
4.1) % of 18-44 year olds who are fairly to very confident in meeting their long-term career objectives while living and working in Nova Scotia (LMAIS)	2012: 57% confident	Increase in confidence	2014: 51% confident 2013: 50% confident
4.2) Number of international students in university post-secondary education in Nova Scotia	2008-09: 3,822 (9%)	Maintain or increase international student numbers	2014-15: N/A* 2013-14: N/A* *Data from MPHEC not yet available 2012-13: 6,605 (15%) 2011-12: 5,863 (14%) 2010-11: 5,066 (12%) 2009-10: 4,398 (11%) 2008-09: 3,822 (9%)

2015-16 Strategic Actions to Achieve Target
- Partner with Communications on an awareness campaign aimed at Nova Scotia students to promote knowledge of future job and career opportunities that exist in the province.
- Work with communities of under-represented groups and underemployed on how best to support education, training and workforce attachment for their communities.
- Through the Innovation Table, the Student Recruitment and Retention sub-table will work to support provincial, national, and international student recruitment and retention efforts, with an emphasis on retaining students through their post-secondary studies and encouraging some students to consider settling in Nova Scotia after graduation.

5) STRATEGIC DIRECTION
Inform: Provide ease of navigation and access to enable Nova Scotians to get information about programs, services, and offerings.

OUTCOME (immediate or intermediate)
Improved awareness of and access to LAE's programs and services.

MEASURE	BASE YEAR DATA	2015-16 TARGET	TRENDS
5.1) # of unique visitors to careers.novascotia.ca website	2013-2014: 76,356 total website users from April 1 to	80,000 users	2014-2015: 79,809 total website users from April 1 to December 31,

	December 31, 2013 (92,841 users from April 1 to March 31, 2104)		2014 First full year of data available in 13-14. Traffic on the site is at a good level and shows both information and program pages being accessed.
5.2) Awareness and accessibility of core LAE programs and services	N/A	N/A	New measure being developed, no data available

2015-16 Strategic Actions to Achieve Target

- Continue to foster relationships with Nova Scotia's employers in growth sectors to proactively assess needs and work together to generate awareness and utilization of government programming.
- Create an outreach and awareness strategy to better support informed decision-making through relevant, accurate and timely labour market information and career planning products.
- Modernize the client service experience to enable better access to, and navigation of, Labour and Advanced Education policies, programs and services.
- Invest in the knowledge and development of staff to better achieve strategic priorities.

6) STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Account: Improve investment outcomes through informed decision-making and accountability, underpinned by strong measurement and evaluation.

OUTCOME (immediate or intermediate)

Meaningful evaluation and performance measures enable the reporting of progress and impact of LAE's work to Nova Scotians.

MEASURE	BASE YEAR DATA	2015-16 TARGET	TRENDS
6.1) Infrastructure to support the development and collection of departmental measures and updates	New system launched in 2013-14	Establishment of departmental performance measures and data collection plan	Project on track
6.2) # of public reports on departmental activities and impact	N/A	N/A	New measure, no data available

2015-16 Strategic Actions to Achieve Target

- Continue to build a robust monitoring and reporting system to track progress and impact.
- Meet our obligations in implementing labour market programs funded by federal/provincial agreements, including review of the Canada Job Grant.
- Evaluate key departmental strategies to ensure efforts and resources are coordinated and adjustments are made as appropriate to continue to meet objectives for successful implementation
- Endeavour to make program/funding decisions and inspection outcomes publicly available.